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lins manufactory, the fortunes of which we shall trace in another article.

Three of the illustrations given herewith represent good specimens of Italian and French tapestry. The gradual progress of the art is well marked, from the set pattern shown in the Italian work, through the conventional and somewhat grotesque design of the Fontainebleau school, to the finished reproduction of a picture by Boucher in the tapestry of the Louis Quinze period. The fourth illustration shows the marks of a number of leading manufacturers.

#### FASHIONABLE STAIRCASE DECORATIONS.

LANDINGS, staircases, and walls are now made a great feature for decoration in fashionable houses, both large and small. When a landing permits of it, it is arranged as an anteroom, carpeted and covered with skins or rugs, with settees or low-cushioned seats; a mirror from floor to ceiling is often introduced, with curtains on either side. The base is protected with a tray or basket, for flowers or ferns, or pretty wicker or basket work, china or terra-cotta, or painted tiles; baskets or trays of wire-work, or cork-work imitative of rockery, are considered common, and therefore not seen in fashionable houses. So says The London Queen, an authority on such subjects. To the same newspaper we are indebted for the following suggestions:

Brackets of oak, or covered with velvet, for china jars or bronzes, are fixed in the corners or on the walls, and anything quaint in the way of shields, daggers, poniards, swords, etc. Water-color drawings are not hung on these landings or staircase walls, as they have too modern an appearance for the fancy of the day, but oil-paintings and valuable engravings are, on the contrary, in great request; but the almost universal decorations are china plates hung at intervals on the walls of landings, staircase, and hall. As regards the aspect of walls themselves, all that is spurious and not genuine is discountenanced, and this is the prevailing idea with respect to all decorations and all adornments of rooms. Imitation is discarded in favor of the real, whatever that real may be, and the result is naturally a purer and more refined style. The walls are not papered or varnished to imitate marble, but are painted a whole color, or, oftener than not, the upper part of the walls is painted, say, a pale cinnamon shade, with a dado of dark chocolate, with an arabesque border of chocolate painted on a cinnamon ground, dividing the dado from the upper portion of the wall. Ladies with artistic tastes, and plenty of leisure for the occupation, can easily design and paint borders of this description, according to individual fancy. Oak panels and wood carvings are much appreciated for staircase and wall decorations; but to indulge in them requires a long purse, and some little patience, if a series or set of oak panels is desired. Covering the walls with oriental fabrics is another fashion of the hour. This also runs into money and material. Tapestry is the delight of its owner, and in some few unique houses the entrance-halls are hung with tapestry; but this is rather a rare adornment for a hall, although it is to be seen in some well-known houses in the metropolis. It was formerly the fashion to have narrow stair-carpet in the centre of the staircase, and to display a foot or a foot and a half of white on either side of the carpet. The idea now is to cover the stairs completely from wall to balustrade, and the less of border shown on this wide carpeting, the better the style. Where the saving expense is an object, crimson or claret felt, with an under carpet, has not a bad appearance. In houses that can boast of oak staircases, the stair carpet is of the narrowest, scarcely more than a foot in width, the polished oak stairs being thus displayed. In bijou houses in fashionable localities, where the rents are as high as the houses are small, the owners have recourse to every plan and expedient to render them more commodious and less ugly. To gain additional space, and to improve the appearance of these very narrow staircases, the wooden bannister-rails are removed, and are replaced by open iron balustrades, the lower part of which is level with each stair, some four to six inches, according to the width to be gained. This arrangement considerably widens the staircase and very much en-

hances the appearance. To turn from small houses to stately mansions, it is a favorite plan to place troughs for ivy and trailing plants at the foot of the staircase balustrades; these troughs are either of white china or painted pottery, and a trellis-work of wicker-work, either gilded or not, is fastened to the balustrade to form a support to the plants. It is only in houses having light staircases that this decoration is carried out, as on dark staircases the plants do not thrive and the effect is hardly noticed. The trellis-work and the inner troughs of tin are movable, so that there is no difficulty in watering the plants.

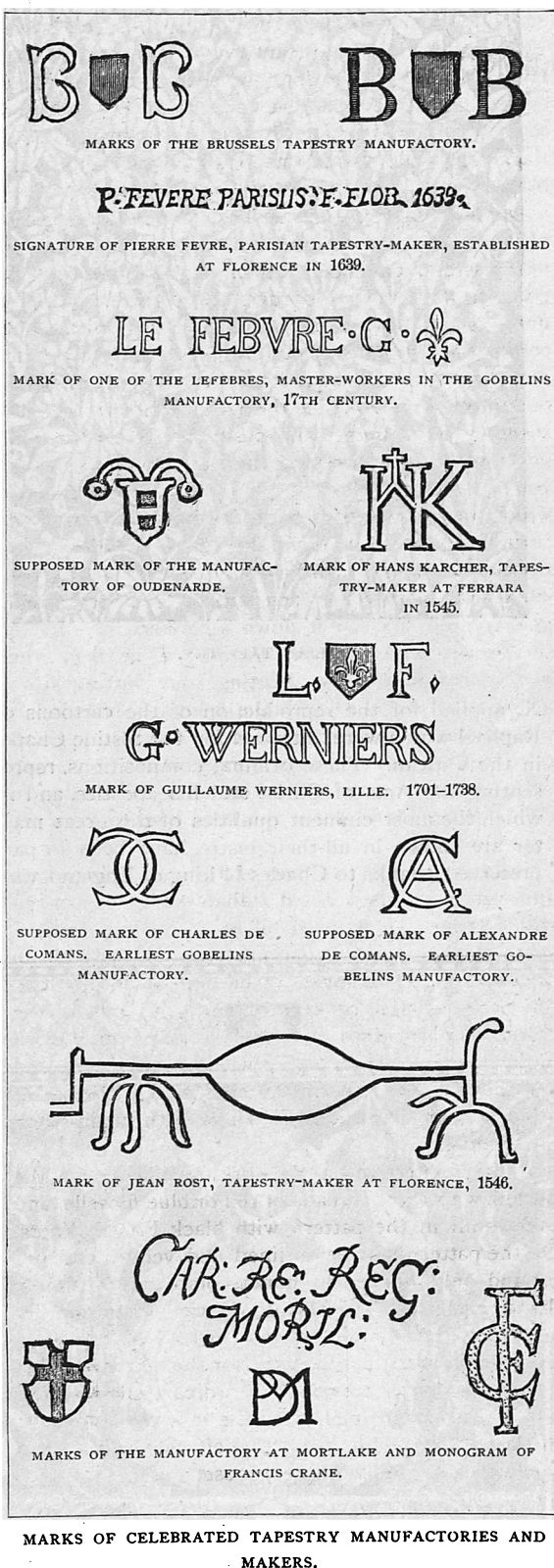
In many houses the small glass alcove at the head of the first landing, a mere apology for a conservatory, is now converted into a miniature boudoir, and

seen in these halls; cabinets and carved chairs stand in convenient spots; a writing-table, a folding screen, and other comforts are here arranged. In small houses, where it is possible to convert a small passage into a snug little hall by removing the partition which separates it from some small room adjoining, this is frequently done; but where nothing of the kind can be attempted, the few touches that can be added are given, such as plates and pictures on the walls, and curtains at the end of the so-called hall of some thick material.

#### STAMPED WALL LEATHER.

THE employment of stamped leather, or the admirable paper imitations that are made of it, like most of the prevailing fashions for interior decoration, is simply an old practice revived. In the middle ages embossed leather was not only used in the homes of the wealthy for adorning the walls of rooms, but also as carpets. This was looked on at first as a refinement of luxury. "Leathers for laying down in the rooms in the summer time," say the inventories of the Duke of Burgundy. In 1416, says M. Jacquemart, in his interesting "History of Furniture," Isabeau of Bavaria sent for "six leather carpets for the floor." This was one of the delicate devices of the German coquette, for although on several solemn occasions the floors had been covered not only with tapestries, but even with the most costly materials, the general practice, continued down to the period of the Valois kings, as shown in many paintings, was to strew the apartments with flowers and foliage. This custom was not discontinued till the time when the velvet-pile, or oriental carpets, began to be multiplied, and especially when the looms of the West succeeded in imitating them, the strewing of the floors gave place to the velvet fabric.

Returning to the fifteenth century, we find that in the same year, 1416, the Duc de Berry possessed a large piece of red leather decked with several escutcheons in gules, with three bends argent surrounding the shield of Castile. This was one of those highly-prized Spanish "Cordovans" which for a long time gave their name to the hangings known as "cordovan leather." At first the leather hangings were painted with some uniform pattern set off with designs, produced by the hot iron on the roller. Large pieces made of square skins sewn or glued together formed the principal portions of the hanging, which was completed by the means of narrower strips concealing the seams or joinings. As regards the colors, the imagination could conjure up no vision more brilliant than the reality. The ground was most commonly of silver or gold, this last effect being produced by means of a colored varnish laid over the silver. The arabesques and other ornaments vied in the brightness of their hues with this gorgeous ground. The inventory of Catherine de Médicis, published by M. Edmond Bonnaffé, gives some idea of the richness of these leathers at the close of the sixteenth century. Here are mentioned gold and silver hangings on an orange ground, with the queen's cipher; others with orange mountings, gilded or silvered on a violet ground; others again sea-green, with mountings similar to the preceding, or else red, with gold and dove-colored mountings, blue with gold, silver, and red mountings, not to speak of the multifarious mourning hangings, in which the background is relieved by silver alone. All the leather here described constituted movable hangings. But so early as the fifteenth century, leather of a different description had been introduced for fixed hangings. Thus the Marquis de Laborde quotes the following entry from the royal accounts of Charles VIII.: "1496. To Jehan Garnier, residing at Tours, the sum of four livres, fifteen sous tournois, granted to him for a large white ox-skin, delivered and consigned by him to a painter whom the king had sent for from Italy, whom the said lady (the queen) had ordered to make and paint the hangings of her bed." The learned author adds: "This description of work was introduced, or reintroduced, into France at the end of the fifteenth century by Italian painters, and was continued throughout the whole of the sixteenth century and the first years of the seventeenth century. The painting is raised on a gilded ground and keeps well." In the Cluny Museum is a series of paintings



gives a better appearance to a staircase than drooping plants deprived of light and air. These little retreats are now filled in with painted or figured glass, the tiny floor is carpeted, pretty small chairs are placed around, and a fancy table with a fancy cover in the centre, with a vase of cut flowers and ornaments of various descriptions in any available corner. The front halls of houses, whether they are stately vestibules or little better than narrow passages, are now furnished and decorated, instead of being unfurnished and undecorated; the cold-looking floor-cloth is replaced by a carpet, or the floor is tiled and covered with rugs or skins. Trophies of the chase are a favorite adornment for the walls; blue china jars and beakers, with perhaps a large palm in the centre, are

in this manner coming from an old house in Rouen, and on a sheep-skin, gilt and worked with stamped dies, representing Romê seated and bearing Victory, besides six other pictures, representing Scævola, Torquatus, Cocles, Curtius, Manlius, and Calphurnius. This description of hanging was let into the woodwork of panels. In 1540 Sebastian Serliol, architect of Francis I., purchased some Levant skins and others for the use of Fontainebleau, and in 1557 two Parisians, Jehan Louvet and Jehan Fourcault, residing at the Hôtel Nesle, received what they were entitled to for the portions of gilded leather supplied by them to the queen. The latter received, moreover, four livres for a pavilion made of sheep-skin, silvered and enriched with red figures, for use in the king's cabinet at Monceaux.

But it would almost seem as if these paintings, with all their gold and silver, were found insufficient for the luxury of the seventeenth century. At least it was about the beginning of this century that the idea was introduced of ornamenting leather with stamped reliefs, often very full, obtained by means of a wooden matrix or mould pressed firmly on the leather while softened by heat. These reliefs, consisting of arabesques, foliage, branches, flowers, and birds, followed the changes of style peculiar to each epoch, and at times supplied hangings of a very grand character, the reliefs heightening the effect of the colors and metals employed in their ornamentation. The most ancient leathers were those of Cordova, which were soon imitated by Venice and Flanders. Later on Paris, Lyons, Carpentras, and Avignon began to manufacture these hangings. Henry IV., like others, held this industry in great esteem, and endeavored to encourage it by establishing workshops in the Faubourgs Saint Jacques and Saint Honoré. The cost of such hangings was far too great for any but the very wealthy, and they were gradually succeeded by paper hangings, which have maintained their ground down to the present time.

In both England and the United States, however, with the new-born rage for the home beautiful, there has lately been a revival in the use of stamped leather for interior decorations. Nothing can be more effective for the wainscoting of a spacious library than stamped leather in quiet colors such as one can find at Yandell's in New York, or the bronzed and brightly variegated colored stamped leather from the same house. For screens stamped leather is exceedingly durable and can be made in the highest degree decorative.

#### PRACTICAL HINTS ON ART NEEDLEWORK.

FIGURES worked in silk are always decorative, but many people find a difficulty in doing them well. A few instructions may be given which if followed exactly will remove all difficulties. To begin with, the material should be one on which silks look well; satin is very appropriate. On whatever background you choose the figures should be traced with the greatest care. The outline should then be gone over with pen and ink, or a fine brush and oil paint. Unless the features and all the small details are drawn very finely and with perfect accuracy the work cannot be satisfactory; when this is done the worst is over, the rest of the operation is easy enough. There is no occasion to use a frame; it takes longer, and the result, if you are a good worker, is no better. But a beginner should try one figure upon linen before starting on silk or satin.

Begin by outlining the faces, arms and legs—in fact, all the flesh—with brown filoselle, using only one thread, and making the features as distinct as you can; then with two threads outline the dresses with the darkest shade of the color you intend to use for them; then put in the accessories, such as leaves and flowers, working them thick—not merely outline—in their natural colors; then return to the figures. Take one thread of flesh color, and work straight up and down the face till all is filled in, slipping your needle under the brown mouth and eyes that you have previously outlined. Work the arms and legs with two threads of flesh-colored filoselle. For the hair take two threads of chestnut brown, and work in the direction of the lines of the head, rather coarsely, so as to give the effect of curls and waves. For the dresses three shades of each color are required; with

the darkest you have already outlined the dress and at the chief lines. With two threads of the second shade you now must fill in the principal parts, always working in the direction of the chief lines, and taking rather long stitches. Do not put in too many stitches or work too tightly, or the material will be puckered. Finally, put in the high lights, with the lightest shade of color, which should be nearly white. These figures are extremely effective when stretched on a board and put over a chimney-piece under the looking-glass, or for the front of a piano, removing the usual fretwork ornaments, or for the cover of a blotting-book, or for panels of any description. If the figures are large, crewels can be used instead of silks, the method of working being precisely the same.

For all articles that have to be looked at from a distance, coarse work is much the most effective. By coarse work is not meant rough and untidy work, but the use of three, four, or even five threads of crewels at once, which gives a richness and softness to the work, unattainable by any other means. Carriage-rugs, window-curtains, bed-hangings, and bath-blankets should all be worked in this style.

Appliqué saves a great deal of labor in large pieces of work, and can be done by any one possessed of neatness and patience. Let us suppose that we are going to work curtain-borders of brown velvet appliquéd on to fawn-colored silk sheeting with gold cord. First, trace the pattern on to the velvet by pouncing, then cut the pattern out carefully one-sixteenth of an inch outside the outline; stretch the silk sheeting in a frame, and paste the velvet pattern on it with paste, keeping the paper pattern before you as a guide. When dry it is ready for couching, which means the edging of the pattern with gold cord, braid, or six or eight threads of filoselle. Put the end of the gold cord through to the back of the work with a stiletto; then with a fine needle and gold-colored silk sew it down all round the edge of the brown velvet, putting the needle up from the back through the silk sheeting, and putting it in again, over the cord, into the velvet. The stitches must be taken quite straight across the cord at equal distances. Small stalks or sprays, also the veining of leaves and centre of flowers, must be worked in silks. When done, paste the back over to keep the ends tidy.

Brick stitch is a quick way of filling in large spaces, and was much used in old Italian work. Cover the whole space you wish to fill in with long stitches, taken straight across from one outline to another in double crewels. It must not be done in satin-stitch, all the wool must be kept on the right side of the work; then lay lines of crewels, about a quarter of an inch apart, at right angles with the first lines, and sew them down with tiny stitches, also a quarter of an inch apart. Outline the whole with chain-stitch or couching.

Another effective way of working is to couch the outline with eight threads of red or blue filoselle, and then to fill in the pattern with black French knots. Or the pattern may be outlined and veined, and the ground only worked in honey-comb, or any simple diaper pattern. This only looks well when the design is bold and well drawn. Instead of couching, thick chain-stitch can be used for the outline. This is done in double crewels like ordinary chain-stitch, but instead of putting the needle into the middle of the last stitch, put it in on the left side half way up the last stitch, and work very loosely.

#### SUGGESTIONS FOR CRÉTONNE WORK.

Fix the silk, satin, or cloth foundation upon a work-frame, having previously gummed on the flowers, birds, and butterflies, cut out from remnants of crétonne, throwing away the very small and straggling ends of grass and stalk. Buttonhole round the edges of the flowers and leaves with silk, putting the stitches at a little distance from each other. Work over the other parts with colored silks, in no particular stitch, but just working long or short stitches as required. Heighten the effects of light and shade as much as possible with very bright shades of filoselle. Work the stalks in brown silk, adding little green sprigs or ends of twig, according to your own device. It is not necessary to work over the whole flower; a few stitches here and there are quite sufficient. Give

the centres of flowers and the veining of leaves distinctly.

The best flowers to procure are bunches of azaleas, with green leaves, putting in the spots and stamens with red, and working over the brightest lights with white filoselle. Lilies, apple-blossoms, carnations, ferns, brown and green leaves, are all effective. As in crewel-work, roses are best avoided, for they are apt to look somewhat heavy.

Birds and butterflies must be arranged about the pattern. This work is used for curtains, valances, brackets, banner-screens, small table-covers, borders, and cushions. All kinds of ends of silk can be used up for the butterflies' antennæ and such small things as cannot be cut out.

#### PAINTING UPON GLASS.

THERE are two ways for amateurs to paint upon glass, viz., with varnish or transparently, in water-colors. The first of these is best for windows, and ground glass is best to paint upon. The following colors will be needed, in fine powder, mixed, when used, with picture copal varnish; diluted, when necessary, with spirits of turpentine:

Raw and Burnt Sienna,	Burnt Umber,
Rose Madder,	Carmine (or
Brown Pink,	Crimson Lake),
Yellow Lake,	Gamboge,
French Ultramarine,	Prussian Blue,
Verdigris,	Ivory-black, opaque.

A few sable pencils, a flat camel's-hair brush, some picture copal varnish, and a little spirits of turpentine are also necessary. The materials being ready, proceed as follows: Lay the glass flat on the print or drawing to be copied, and with a very fine sable pencil and ivory-black, mixed with varnish, trace all the outlines. When thoroughly dry, raise it to a slanting position, by placing it upon a frame with pieces of upright wood on either side, and a sheet of white paper flat beneath it; by this means the effect of the coloring will be better seen, which may at once be proceeded with. One caution is perhaps here necessary: be careful not to rub up the black in the coloring, as it is liable to smear if much worked over. On this account moist ivory-black is frequently, and with advantage, substituted for putting in the outline. It may be used with a pen most conveniently, fine or coarse at the points, according to the nature of the work. When finished, the painting should be fixed up in the window with the unpainted side outwards.

A few hints as to mixing the colors may be useful. The nearest approximation to scarlet is made by the admixture of gamboge with rose madder, crimson lake, or carmine; for greens, verdigris is very brilliant, and almost every shade may be made by adding yellow lake or brown pink in different proportions. When a flat even tint is required, the camel-hair brush is used, and a dabber (made by simply covering a little cotton wool with fine leather), which is particularly useful for backgrounds in figure subjects and skies in landscapes, and this applies also to the use of water-colors. When the painting is finished it must be varnished.

Painting glass transparently in water-colors is decidedly the best method for magic-lantern slides. Plain clear glass should always be used, except for windows, when ground glass may be substituted with advantage. The glass should be washed over with a piece of rag and a little gall; this removes any greasiness there may be upon it. The colors are manufactured expressly for the work.

Small subjects are most effectively painted in water-colors, as a finish and delicacy are attainable impossible in the use of varnish-colors.

The outline should be made with a pen charged with liquid color, containing a small portion of ox-gall, and should be varnished with thin mastic varnish before any attempt is made to work upon it. The colors being placed upon the palette, and diluted with water, we proceed in the same manner as in painting varnish-colors. These colors dry rapidly, but it is necessary between each layer of color to give the glass, or that portion of it which has been worked upon, a slight coating with varnish, to prevent the second color wiping off or rubbing up the first; for this purpose it is desirable to use the enamel varnish made expressly for glass-painting.